

SOECA MEETING MINUTES: March 17th, 2021

* Remote Meeting via Zoom *

Prepared by Claire Zietz, Secretary

22 in attendance.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The current account balance is \$10,866 as we have not been spending as much as we would in a normal year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- President Chris Reynolds announced that SOECA as an organization is not in compliance with current tax rules and regulations. The Board has been looking into correcting this with the possibility of becoming a 501(C)4 or another not for profit entity that is recognized by the federal government. In order to become compliant, SOECA funds are needed to hire a lawyer to help guide this process.
 - Anne Spielberg spoke about two of the options.
 - Mr. Reynolds mentioned that if you would like to be a part of the committee to review the bylaw changes to please reach out to him at soeca.board@gmail.com.
 - The expense to hire a lawyer is estimated to be around \$600-\$1000. Mr. Reynolds asked the members if the expense of legal advice and proceeding with exploring options is approved.
 - Expense and course of action were approved unanimously.

GUEST SPEAKER: ALAN PULTYNIWICZ, RECYCLING COORDINATOR, RECYCLING AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DIVISION, MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. Pultyniewicz led the members through a presentation of the Montgomery County recycling program. Some facts and takeaways:

- Recycling one aluminum can can save enough to power your television for three hours. Everyone can make a difference
- The goal of the program: aim for zero waste
- Since 1991 there has been a gradual increase in recycling. Currently, single families recycle 65%, multi family units recycle 30%, commercial 55%
 - Anything above 25% for the multifamily community is deemed “excellent”
- Montgomery county uses split trucks – this is a “dual stream” process and saves a step later in the process. Montgomery county is working to be as efficient as possible
- 16% of what is thrown away as plastics are actually not recyclable
- Mixed broken glass is still recycled but it is the only item that they do not get money for
- Paper items to recycle include:
 - mixed paper
 - food containers (just make sure empty and lightly rinsed out)

- egg cartons
- magazines
- phone books
- shredded paper (placed separately in a paper bag)
- newspapers
- coated paper items (lightly rinse out and remove the cap)
- envelopes (you can leave in any plastic window)
- coffee bean bags (if it is mostly paper and tear-able, then it is recyclable)
- Blue bin recycling items may include:
 - spray bottles (lightly rinsed out if possible, or once all the spray and pressure is released)
 - glass bottles and jars (rinse and take the caps and lids off, which also go into the bin)
 - cans (and you do not need to remove paper label)
 - plastic tubs, jars, containers, bottles
 - aluminum cans (if has a paper label that you can remove, please do so)
 - metal lids (of spaghetti jars, etc)
- Yard waste in compost bin
- What **NOT** to recycle:
 - hazardous waste (bug spray cans, etc)
 - anything with the number 6. “Nix 6!”
 - foam
 - Solo cups
 - plastic utensils
 - mixed material bags (such as paper and foil)
 - plastic bags (instead, take to a center that will recycle such as Giant or Safeway)
- Other:
 - scrap metal program – may call 311 to schedule that service
 - CDs cannot be recycled curbside, but through the electronics recycling program
- Why it is important to recycle the correct materials? It takes away from the capacity of the center. Plus they actually have to physically pull it off the line which diverts valuable resources that could be spent on actual recycling.
- Where do the recycled materials go?
 - Every three months they send out bids for the products. Montgomery County has a history of very clean products (especially thanks to the dual truck system) and does not have any issue finding buyers.
 - Almost all buyers are domestic
- To note:
 - They will replace any broken bins you may have. Simply contact them to arrange a swap.
- A question and answer session followed.

TOPIC: ZINNIA, FORMERLY MRS. K’S TOLLHOUSE

Chris Reynolds, as the president of SOECA, was contacted by the new tenant for what was previously Mrs. K's Tollhouse; the name of the new restaurant is Zinnia. Some highlights of their plans include:

- Rebuilding the kitchen
- They would like to host SOECA for a Happy Hour at their soft opening (we may potentially hold our May SOECA meeting there, outside and socially distanced)
- The fountain, gazebo, and garden will all remain. They have hired the groundskeeper to continue working there. (He has been there for 25 years.)
- The Beer Garden format is planned to open in May. Other phases include a café with bakery and fine dining.
- Barrel Bar will remain as is, with the addition of more bathrooms
- They are looking to make the space more ADA compliant
- They anticipate knocking down the wine rack walls to make it larger in the back room where we've held other Happy Hours.
- They have signed a long term lease of 20 years
- The big parking lot across the street will stay
- There will be outdoor music speakers without being disruptive to the nearby homeowners (whom they have already reached out to)
- Charlie Demma, a partner in this venture and a SOECA neighbor, is helping to preserve some of the historical documents (guest book archives, etc) as the previous owners left many items that are being saved and digitized in cooperation with the Montgomery County Historical Society

There being no further business, Mr. Reynolds adjourned the meeting at 8:30pm.